

George Lodge 32
Howardsville
Albemarle County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-975

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VA

2-HOWARD,

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ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Addendum to
George Lodge # 32
Howardsville
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GEORGE LODGE #32

HABS No. VA-975

Addendum to George Lodge #32
Howardsville
Albemarle County
Virginia

Location: E. side of Va. Rte 602, .25 mi. NW of intersection
with Va. Rte 626, in center of Howardsville

Present Owner: Hunter E. Fenwick

Present Occupant: George Lodge 32

Present Use: Masonic Lodge

Statement of
Significance: Ever since the Brethren of George Lodge 32 moved to
Howardsville, Virginia in 1846, they have occupied the
same building. The Lodge is a modest, brick
structure, located at the geographic center of
Howardsville. It has stood as a landmark in
Howardsville since that time and remains one of the
only significant structures to survive the floods of
Hurricane Camille.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

Lodge History: George Lodge 32 is one of the early Virginia Masonic Lodges, founded in 1791, only 13 years after the founding of the Grand Lodge in Richmond. It was first located in Warminster, in the present Nelson County, where the original founding members chose the given name of George Washington as the name of their lodge, since the name Washington was already taken. In 1820, the Lodge moved to New Market, now Norwood, also in Nelson County, where it remained until it became extinct in 1823.

In 1846 George Lodge 32 was revived and brought to its present location in Howardsville, Albemarle County. There it has survived in its original state as a small rural lodge, never in its history claiming more than 55 members.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Lodge:

The Lodge has had several distinguished members in its history. Several persons of the prominent Cabell family have been members, including the driving force behind the foundation and early years of the Lodge, Nicholas Cabell. Other Cabells who were at one time members were Dr. A.J. Cabell, D.S. Cabell, Edward Cabell, and Dr. Francis Cabell. Perhaps the most illustrious member of George Lodge 32 was Major Charles Yancey. Yancey fought in the War of 1812, served in the Virginia State Legislature, and was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Virginia from 1822-1824, the only member of George Lodge 32 to achieve this distinction.

Nothing is known about the builders of the Lodge, or for what purpose the structure was originally intended. It was completed sometime prior to 1846, when George Lodge 32 rented the building. The building was purchased by the Lodge in 1868. The lodge has at various times in its history rented out the first floor for use as a school, but has always reserved the second floor exclusively for its own use. In 1855 very extensive repair work was done, evidenced by the payment of bills amounting to \$502.96 for brickwork, and \$598.66 for woodwork. The fresco work on the second floor was carried out in 1879 by one Charles Mathonie, apparently a transient artist. The slate roof was installed in 1889; what it replaced is unknown.

C. Sources of Information

1. Bibliography

Brown, William Moseley. George Lodge No. 32 A.F. & A.M.
Staunton; McClure Printing Company, 1950.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: This is a small, brick, vernacular structure typical of small brick dwellings of the mid-19th century in the Piedmont area of Virginia.
2. Condition of Fabric: Fair to good. Brick is crumbling in some places.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: The Lodge is about 25 feet wide in the front with one bay, while it is 35 feet long on the side (three bays). It is two stories high.

2. Foundations: Brick and stone.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Brick, with a stone wall around the entrance stairs.
4. Structural System, framing: Brick exterior bearing walls with wood interior framing. A pair of tension cables run east and west through the middle of the building between the first and second floor.
5. Chimneys: There is one chimney on the north wall.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The front door is on the west facade. There is no detail.
 - b. Windows: Wooden double-hung windows on the first floor have six-over-six-light sash. Double-hung windows on the second floor have nine-over-six-light sash.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: A gable roof of slate with the chimney protruding on the north side through the roof.
8. Ornament: The tension bars that run through the building are tied off at their ends by decorative iron stars. Between the two stars on the west facade and above the front door is a rectangular Masonic plaque of Indiana limestone.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans:
 - a. First floor plan: The entrance on the west facade opens into the dining area of the Lodge with the door to the stairs immediately on the right. In the back of the dining area there is a partition wall which does not touch the ceiling. There are two swinging doors in the partition wall which lead to a kitchen area of small dimensions. The ceiling is extremely low.

- b. Second floor plan: Arriving at the top of the narrow stairwell, there are two doors, one on the right and one directly in front with a six pane light over it. There are two small rooms on the west side or the front of the lodge. The door on the right at the top of the stairs leads into the Lodge room which takes up the remainder of the floor area.
2. Stairways: There is a small stair in the southwest corner of the Lodge.
3. Flooring: Straight grained pine of normal dimensions is used on both floors. The floors are not stained or treated in any way other than a lime rinse.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: On the first floor and in the small rooms on the second floor the plaster is simply painted. However in the Lodge Room, the walls and ceiling are frescoed in a classical frame motif with a perspective scene in fresco on the east wall behind the Master's chair.
5. Doorways and doors: Paneled doors have a simple trim. They are made of pine.
6. Trim: There is no ceiling trim. There is a plaster acanthus leaf ceiling ornament in the center of the Lodge Room.
7. Hardware: Simple cast iron door latches, hinges and locks remain.
8. Lighting: On the first floor there are 4 - 10 to 20 year old incandescent lights on the ceiling. On the second floor, several oil lamps that have been converted to electricity remain.
9. Heating: Each floor has a large gas heater.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: The front faces west against a high bluff approximately 150 feet away. The lodge sits high on a hill with its south facade facing the approaching road. The rear of the Lodge is only 4 feet away from the side of the Howardsville Methodist Church. The site rises away from the Lodge on the north side.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation was developed by students in the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia, under the direction of K. Edward Lay, Assistant Dean. It was donated to the Historic American Buildings Survey, and was not completed under HABS supervision, nor edited by HABS staff. Documented in 1976.